UNITED
POTATO GROWERS OF CANADA
LES PRODUCTEURS UNIS DE POMMES DE TERRE DU CANADA

HOLDINGS REPORT

April 2024

TOTAL HOLDINGS CANADA

('000 cwt)

Province	April 2024	April 2023	% Change	5 year average
PEI	11,673	13,752	-15.1%	11,676
NB	4,779	6,139	-22.2%	5,618
Quebec	4,783	5,008	-4.5%	4,862
Ontario	2,985	2,429	22.9%	2,616
Manitoba	12,252	8,871	38.1%	9,275
Alberta	15,558	10,179	52.8%	9,935
BC	364	192	89.6%	260
TOTAL	**52,393**	**46,570**	**12.5%**	**44,242**

Source: AAFC - Infohort

There are 52,393,000 cwt of potatoes in storage in Canada as of April 1, 2024, a 12.5% increase over April 2023, and well above the 5 year average. The majority of the stocks continue to be in the west, mainly in the processing sector. We can see that levels in Quebec and the Maritimes are well below April of last year and even below the 5 year average for Quebec and New Brunswick, much to do with the very rainy growing season and higher cull rates this marketing year. There are fewer concerns in the Fresh sector than there may have been post-harvest, with supply and demand well balanced and no real concerns about carryover into new crop, in fact inventory in reds is getting quite tight as it is south of the border.

Stocks of potatoes for the processing sector are 24% higher than in April of last year and well above the 5 year average, however it is important to note the record production this year with increased acreage due to the previous two years of shortages in the sector in North America. This, combined with better yields, resulted in a much bigger pile to start the season. There does continue to be movement of processing potatoes from west to east to use up the surplus and balance out shortages in some of the eastern provinces, but all indications are that supplies will go long in the west.

The seed sector saw a a big increase in movement in March and a decrease in overall stocks of 5.6% when compared to April of last year. Overall stocks are higher than the 5 year average, but with higher stock levels of seed only in PEI and Ontario and well offset by reduced inventories in all other regions in Canada.

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FRESH SECTOR

With two big holidays in March, St Patrick's Day and Easter, it is not a surprise that movement in the fresh sector was good for the month and stocks in the east have been depleted. Overall, fresh stocks are 8.3% below April of last year, but still well above the five year average. Acreage does remain fairly stable in the sector, however perhaps the trend of more yellows than reds and the resulting improvement in overall yields continue to increase fresh production numbers. Although we see increases in stocks in Ontario and BC in terms of percentage vs. last year, both regions started with a bigger crop of fresh potatoes post-harvest. Inventories are getting tighter, particularly in reds, and overall the fresh market remains very well balanced at this time of year and we do not expect much carryover. This may impact early planting of fresh although there have been reports of a tightness in certain seed varieties in the east.

Province	2021	2022	2023	2024	% change vs. 2023	5 yr avg
PEI	1,963	3,332	3,648	3,073	-15.8%	2,911
NEW BRUNSWICK	925	1,588	1,566	1,264	-19.3%	1,186
TOTAL MARITIMES	2,888	4,920	5,214	4,337	-16.8%	4,097
QUEBEC	1,778	2,306	1,856	1,944	4.8%	1,897
ONTARIO	528	661	513	612	19.3%	548
MANITOBA	718	581	766	527	-31.2%	639
ALBERTA	228	248	387	387	0.00%	279
TOTAL PRAIRIES	946	829	1,153	914	-20.7%	918
BC	227	155	106	299	182.1%	181
TOTAL CANADA	**6,367**	**8,871**	**8,842**	**8,106**	**-8.3%**	**7,641**

Source: AAFC - Infohort

PROCESSING SECTOR

At 36,368,000 cwt as of April 1, 2024, inventories of processing potatoes or 24% higher than April of 2023 and well above the 5 year average. As noted earlier, after two years of shortages in the sector in North America, contracted acres were increased for the 2023 planting season and when yields returned closer to trend line for the large producing regions, including Alberta and Manitoba in Canada, there was a much larger pile in inventory to start the marketing year. There continues to be movement of this surplus into areas needing it but most reports are that the sector will have carryover into new crop and that is impacting the pace of planting for earlies in the sector. Contract negotiations for frozen have been completed in Alberta and are well underway in Manitoba and other parts of the country and chip contracts have been completed in Ontario and Quebec. Despite continued expansion in processing in NA, indications are that there are cuts in acreage for this year.

Province	2021	2022	2023	2024	% change vs. 2023	5 yr avg
PEI	5,935	7,517	8,535	7,011	-17.9%	7,121
NEW BRUNSWICK	2,304	3,598	3,088	2,196	-28.9%	3,057
TOTAL MARITIMES	8,239	11,115	11,623	9,207	-20.8%	10,179
QUEBEC	1,730	2,543	2,275	2,051	-9.8%	2,058
ONTARIO	1,899	2,399	1,800	2,216	23.1%	1,962
MANITOBA	7,183	6,364	6,115	9,912	62.1%	7,007
ALBERTA	5,529	5,340	7,524	12,981	72.5%	7,706
TOTAL PRAIRIES	12,712	11,704	13,639	22,893	67.9%	14,713
BC	-	-	-	-		-
TOTAL CANADA	**24,580**	**27,761**	**29,337**	**36,368**	**24.0%**	**28,913**

Source: AAFC - Infohort

SEED SECTOR

Inventories in the seed sector are down in comparison to April of last year, almost 473,000 cwt or 5.6%. Movement of seed certainly picked up in March, almost 1.5 times that of February, as different regions throughout North America begin to prepare for planting. Despite a decrease in certified acres in Canada over the last two years it would seem based on inventories, and sector estimates, that production has actually increased, and current inventories are 3.1% higher than the five year average. We will continue to watch movement within the sector as there will be many more regions setting intentions and preparing for planting in the month of April. Contract negotiations in the processing sector have certainly impacted movement of early varieties, April disappearance in the sector will be closely monitored.

Province	2021	2022	2023	2024	% change vs. 2023	5 yr avg
PEI	1,757	1,553	1,570	1,589	1.2%	1,644
NEW BRUNSWICK	966	1,584	1,485	1,318	-11.2%	1,374
TOTAL MARITIMES	2,723	3,137	3,055	2,907	-4.8%	3,018
QUEBEC	844	1,076	877	787	-10.3%	907
ONTARIO	64	140	116	157	35.3%	105
MANITOBA	1,531	1,471	1,990	1,813	-8.9%	1,629
ALBERTA	1,805	1,534	2,268	2,190	-3.4%	1,949
TOTAL PRAIRIES	3,336	3,005	4,258	4,003	-6.0%	3,578
BC	89	17	86	65	-24.4%	70
TOTAL CANADA	**7,056**	**7,375**	**8,392**	**7,919**	**-5.6%**	**7,679**

Source: AAFC - Infohort

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DISAPPEARANCE REPORT

	March 2021	March 2022	March 2023	March 2024	Change 2024 vs 2023
PEI	1,852	2,431	2,726	2,274	-16.6%
NB	928	1,680	1,521	1,285	-15.5%
Quebec	1,246	1,284	1,204	1,196	-0.7%
Ontario	760	776	993	865	-12.9%
Manitoba	1,713	2,403	2,079	2,241	7.8%
Alberta	2,707	3,331	3,010	3,628	20.5%
BC	147	159	100	144	44.0%
TOTAL	**9,353**	**12,064**	**11,633**	**11,632**	**-0.004%**

DISAPPEARANCE FOR MARCH 2024

Total disappearance in Canada for March was almost right on track with March of 2023, according to figures from AAFC, only down 1,000 cwt, less than a percent decline. By province, movement for March was down in the east in comparison to the same month last year, and in fact to the last two years in certain regions. Taking into account reports of higher cull rates in many areas, the impact of lower exports to the US due to surplus south of the border may account for what appears to be more sluggish shipments, despite two holidays in the month.

When viewed by sector, only the seed sector appears to be outpacing March movement last year and the fresh sector is only up slightly. Movement in processing continues to be behind in March and stocks remain high in the west.

We will continue to monitor disappearance for April, it will be a key month for seed movement in particular as more regions gear up and begin planting. With erratic weather patterns across the country and lower acreage contracted for processing there are many reports of growers easing into planting this year. In contrast the east may be more eager to get earlies in the ground in reaction to a tightness in the fresh sector in certain areas.

Seed Sector	2024	2023
PEI	-	4
NB	64	66
Quebec	151	166
Ontario	48	85
Manitoba	80	-
Alberta	806	718
BC	3	-
TOTAL	1,152	1,039

Fresh Sector	2024	2023
PEI	888	1,222
NB	254	258
Quebec	667	664
Ontario	254	144
Manitoba	278	299
Alberta	487	237
BC	141	100
TOTAL	2,970	2,924

Processing Sector	2024	2023
PEI	1,386	1,499
NB	967	1,197
Quebec	377	374
Ontario	563	764
Manitoba	1,882	1,780
Alberta	2,335	2,055
BC	-	-
TOTAL	7,510	7,669